

a measure by the lack of time for framing a workable project for a new institution. The new charter was laid before the Chamber of Deputies on October 31, 1896, and was referred to a committee of twenty-two for examination. This committee did not report until winter and their report was not taken up for consideration in the Chamber until May 15, 1897. The bill passed the Chamber on July 1, by a vote of 419 to 97,* and went to the Senate, where it was passed at the October session and became a law on November 17, 1897. The vote upon the passage of the bill in the Chamber of Deputies did not indicate the full strength of the opposition to the charter. The proposition to convert the bank into a state institution was rejected by a vote of 118 to 422, but the proposition that the bank should provide capital for an agricultural bank to the amount of 60,000,000 francs was rejected only by a vote of 287 against 258.

The new charter, which was not greatly changed from the form in which it was submitted by the government, extended the privileges of the bank until December 31, 1920, subject to the power of termination by the Chambers on December 31, 1912, if they should see fit to so vote during the year 1911. The essential features of the old charter were not changed, but the limit of circulation was increased to 5,000,000,000 francs, the bank renounced interest upon two existing loans to the government amounting to 140,000,000 francs, and made a further advance to the government of 40,000,000 francs free of interest. These renunciations of interest are offset by the fact that the government carries in its current account at the bank a sum which is usually equal to the amount of these loans. The bank was required to create at least one new auxiliary bureau each year up to the number of fifteen. The most important of the new obligations imposed upon the bank was the payment of a tax equal to one-eighth of the rate of discount upon that portion of the circulation which exceeds the metallic reserve. This tax

¹ *J&conomiste JSuro^m*, July 2, 1897, XII., 15.